

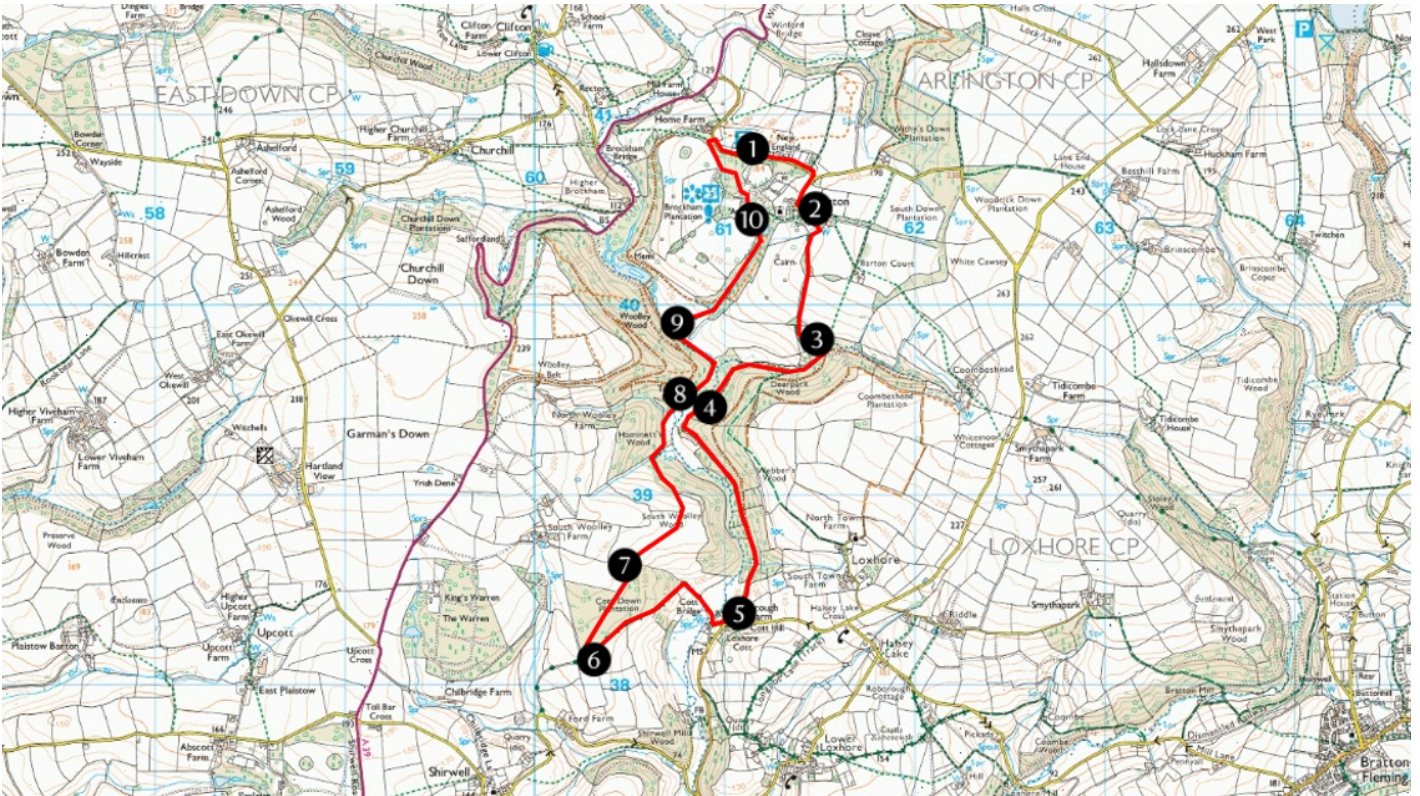
DEVON

Arlington run - Cott Down 10km

This running route explores the Arlington Estate, taking in the verdant treescape of Deer Park Wood, Webber's Wood, South Woolley Wood and Cott Down Plantation, and tracing both banks of the River Yeo.

i Please note

This route includes sections on minor roads at the user's own risk.



Information

Address: Arlington, near Barnstaple, Devon, EX31 4LP

Activity: Running

Challenging

Dog friendly

Full trail: Miles: 6 (km: 9.6)

Duration: 1 hour 15 mins

Total stages: 10

Start point: Arlington Court car park, grid ref: SS611408

1. Exit the car park, opposite the visitor welcome and main entrance to Arlington, turn left, and run up the quite country road, passing a couple of cottages and houses on your left, and a gate on your right. Reaching a junction, turn right, following a fingerpost pointing towards Arlington. Head along the narrow lane, ignore a turning right (which leads to St James's Church), arc left around the bend and run past the rear of the Carriage Museum. Emerging at a junction, ignore the lane leading right and continue straight ahead, past the old Sawmill building (now an National Trust ranger base) and small car park on your left.
2. Opposite the Sawmill staff car park, turn right, leave the lane and run through trees along a track to a field gate, following green-tipped fingerposts for the Deer Park Wood Walk. Go through a gate and turn right, running downhill through a field with a fence on your right as sprawling views open up straight ahead. At the bottom, bear left, pass through another gate and follow the obvious path (a bridleway) as it leads uphill through trees, with the field on your left. Pass a fingerpost pointing right towards the Jubilee Cairn (which leads to a large picnic table and a stone obelisk presiding over a grand vista of Arlington house) and continue running along the bridleway as it crests the hill and starts descending, getting pretty steep in places.
3. The trail enters Deer Park Wood, bears left and then snakes right, crossing a stream. At the next junction, go right, following a green-tipped fingerpost for Loxhore Cott. As you descend, a stream appears on your right. After about 100 metres, a bridleway branches left, towards Loxhore Church, but continue straight along the track, following signs for Loxhore Cot via Tuckers Bridge, running parallel with the increasingly noisy waterway, which has now joined with the River Yeo.

4. Meeting a Y-junction, you can take a shortcut by turning right, crossing the river via Tucker's Bridge and following green-tipped fingerposts back to Arlington Court (in which case, skip to point 11). For our main route, however, continue straight ahead, heeding signage for Loxhore Cott and running with the river babbling on your right. The broad track climbs gently and veers away from the water, before gently descending until the River Yeo becomes audible and then visible again. Pass a small set of wooden steps and an acute left turn for the Deer Park Woodland Walk, but continue running downhill along the main trail, passing a small waterfall, where a stream goes under the track and tumbles down to join the river. Soon the little hamlet of Loxhore Cott looms into view straight ahead and the track descends towards it.
5. Go through a wide gate and pass between a National Trust sign and a map of the Arlington Estate map. The route now leaves the National Trust property, and takes you through a garden (please keep dogs on a short lead) and past a house, where you will see gateposts topped by herons holding eels in their beaks (an emblem of Arlington). Turn right here and run downhill along a lane. Go past Mortuary Cottage (a National Trust holiday let), cross a pretty stone bridge over the river and start ascending a sealed lane, which soon segues into rough track that climbs steeply. Pass a restricted bridleway sign and continue uphill. The track levels out, bears left and skirts around edge of Cott Down Plantation, with woodlands on your right and farm fields on the left, dropping to dish up delightful views over the Yeo Valley towards Barnstable.
6. Run past barns on the left and a fingerpost for Shirwell, and then take a sharp right turn opposite Cott Down farm. Follow a footpath fingerpost and go right again, crossing a stile and entering the treescape of Cott Down Plantation. Go through a tall wooden gate and run along a broad footpath through mix woodlands of beech, oak and holly. Pass through another tall gate and continue along a sensational section of singletrack.
7. Hop over a stile and run along top edge of a field, with a fence on the left and plunging views across Yeo Valley on your right – the river is often visible through the trees. Hug the fenceline and when you reach a fingerpost for 'Cott Brake', follow the footpath as it goes left over stile, and then turns immediately right, along path signed 'Arlington via Tucker Bridge'. The fence is now on your right. Run along this path as it wends right and crosses a stile. Pass another fingerpost for Arlington, go through a gate and continue along a broad track through the top section of South Woolley Wood, with the river down to your right.
8. Soon after the track meets the water's edge you reach pretty Tucker's Bridge. (The shortcut mentioned above rejoins the route here.) Continue straight, running along the broad undulating track, with the lovely Yeo River on your right and moss-bearded trees on your left, until you reach Smallacombe Bridge.
9. Turn right, cross the bridge over the river and follow a public footpath arrow through a gate. Climb the hill, pass through a second gate and enter the wonderful Wilderness. Ascend through the trees along an attractive section of singletrack beside a tumbling stream, ignoring a path that forks right. Keep running uphill with the water on your right until, at the top of the climb, you reach an ornamental lake. Ignore the first left turn (which leads to the mansion house), but when you meet the main track, opposite St James's church, turn left.
10. Pass between the big house (on the left) and the estate's main entrance/exit (right), but continue running along the track. The café is off to your left, if you fancy some well-earned refreshments, otherwise bear right and leave the estate through a gate where the posts are again topped by statuesque herons with eels clasped in their beaks. Almost directly opposite the heron gate, slightly to the right, is a little cut through that takes you directly into the bottom part of the car park.

End point: Arlington Court car park, grid ref: SS611408
